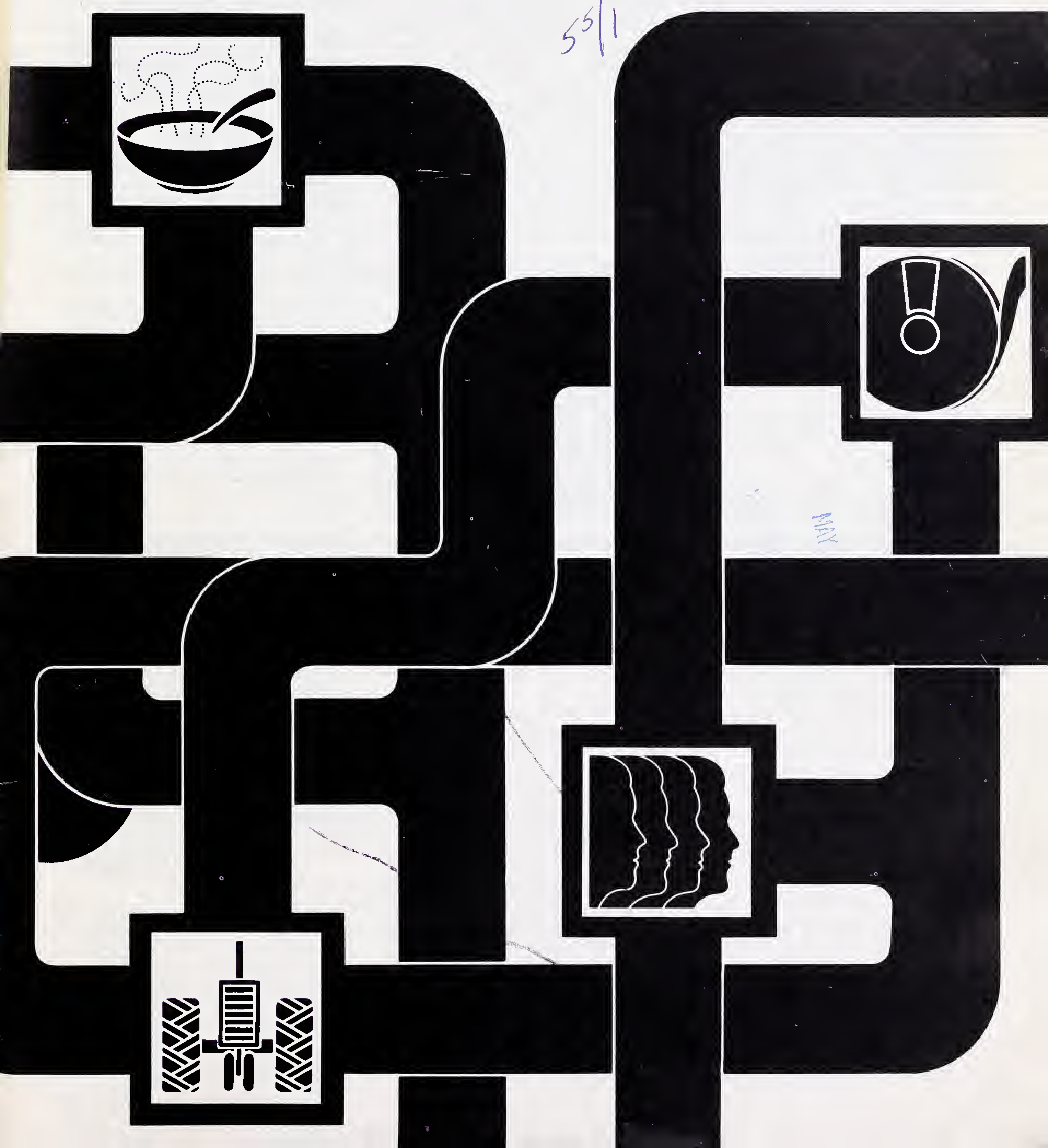
984 United States Department of Agriculture

extension review

Accountability and Evaluation



What Does The Federal Partner Want?

Believe it or not, the federal partner is interested in the same kinds of accountability and evaluation information that states and counties are.

So when you wonder what kind of accountability information the "feds" want, why and what will be of use to them, you probably already are closer to the answer than you realize. Ask yourself:

- Who are the influentials and decisionmakers who "call the shots" in my state or county?
- What kind of questions do they ask me and what information do they want?
- What kind of information packaging gets their attention, approval and action?

You will shape county accountability and evaluation to respond to locally identified problems, issues and questions. You will decide what information you need, for whom, and search out how to find it. Your progress reports, conclusions and recommendations will get passed along to supervisors, local influentials and decisionmakers and interested others.

Can Strengthen State Reports
When your CES state office is asked program questions or must justify budgets, your county reports will feed into whatever response, proposals or reports are developed. When your county results contribute data which can be aggregated with that of other counties, the result will be a more powerful total state report than would otherwise be possible. Then, too, occasionally your county narrative may be unique or so outstanding that it surfaces as a separately identifiable item in the state report.

How does information passed along to the state CES office get used in the county? Do reports outline progress with clientele, improvements or innovations in the program development process, functional operation, staffing and so on? Does the budget information you submit also guide your review of the resource allocations within your control in the county? Can it be used to justify increases in funding, both in-house and from non-Extension granting sources? The kind of information most useful to you in the county is probably also most useful to your state CES office and to us here in ES-USDA.

One fact that county Extension workers sometimes forget is that CES, the state partner, is the channel through which the county partner's accountability and evaluation information reaches ES-USDA. Information provided by counties is aggregated, summarized, combined or otherwise massaged in the state level reporting process. This process often leads to alteration of county reports. But this is to be expected in a process which takes information useful "as is" in the county generating it, and reworks it along with information from other counties in the state to increase the size, scope and result impacts for the state as a whole. It is this larger in-impact more concise-in-size version that ultimately reaches us in ES-USDA.

The federal partner goes through state accountability and evaluation information in a parallel manner to that of states.

What Kind of Accountability and Evaluation?
That which helps us justify budget requests, respond to inquiries from the Congress, congressional aides, the Government Accounting Office, U.S. Office of Management and Budget, USDA Secretary's Office and others at the Department level, the Assistant Secretary for Science and Education, Extension Administrators and others, State Extension Directors and state counterparts to national program leaders, universities, media, agencies and organizations, commodity groups, special and public interest groups, professional and trade associations and the general public.

Response to Inquiries
Information counties provide to states helps us convey:

- how funds are being used
- cost effectiveness
- who we serve, how many, how
- why program is needed, what's happening, accomplishments
- how Extension supports USDA thrusts
- trends, new facets of existing programs
- specific examples of program success, documented impact

Who Needs The Information?
We all do, in part. Individuals use what they need to meet the responsibilities associated with their position.

How Is The Information Used?
In many ways. Some ES staff develop the national reports required by funding sources and others plan new budget justifications and programs, help improve existing ones, generate communication to states, and territories, prepare special reports, write speeches and briefing memorandums for the Secretary and USDA Administrators, create media releases, serve as liaison to the groups previously mentioned, serve as a locator reference for what is being done where, act as a key part of many networks, and more.

The accountability and evaluation information you provide to document local county happenings ultimately becomes an integral part of the proud organizational achievement record all of us in the Extension "family" collectively share as partners. □

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extension review

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John R. Block
Secretary of Agriculture

Orville G. Bentley
Assistant Secretary for Science and Education

Mary Nell Greenwood
Administrator
Extension Service

The *Extension Review*, quarterly publication of the Extension Service is for Extension educators in county, state and USDA agencies. The Secretary of Agriculture has determined that the publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of the public business required by law of the Department. Use of funds for printing this periodical has been approved by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget through September 30, 1985. The Review is issued free by Law to workers engaged in Extension activities. For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Send manuscript inquiries to: The Editor, Extension Service, Room 3135-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250. Telephone (202) 447-4651.

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Guidelines From The Grassroots

Jim Shaner
State Information Extension Specialist
University of Missouri, Columbia

They were animated people, most in seed caps and jeans. Their questions were tough: How do you stop tons of soil from moving off your farm? How can you afford to save soil when you're plowing every acre to turn another dollar to save your farm? Across the cavernous room, educators and parents listen as a minister tells of a single mother—crushed by utility bills and food costs—trying to cope with problem kids. Different members of the group ask: Where will tomorrow's jobs be? Who will help the poor? The elderly? Together they turned the Independence Extension Center into a warehouse of ideas for coping with this decade of change.

Volunteer Investment

More than 200 of these volunteers invested roughly 2,600 hours meeting and studying materials to help establish Extension's educational priorities and approaches in meeting them. Their goal, says regional Extension director Al Black, was to put Kansas City Extension "at the cutting edge" for developing educational solutions for the problems of the 1980's.

To ensure substantive results, Extension used a four-step process, developed by rural sociologist Daryl Hobbs, University of Missouri at Columbia, and Black. First, interviews of 60 opinion leaders helped establish the issues. Then Extension councils in each county listed the issues they and their neighbors faced. Next, Kansas City's Extension staff collected data to analyze trends. Then, using the results of this process, volunteers, chosen to represent the broad interests of Kansas City, identified five categories of concern: economic development, energy, family, food and fiber, and providing human services.

New things are already happening in Kansas City. For one, planning brought together groups that had never been together before.

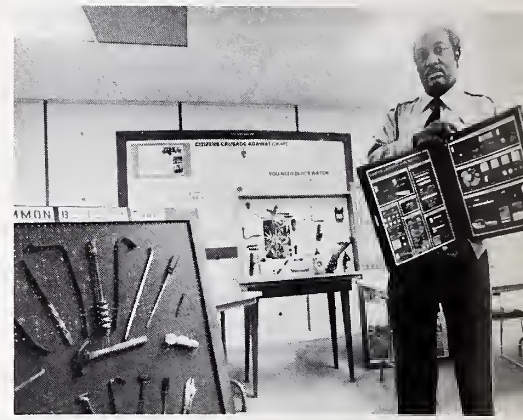
That led to the "first ever" BEST Conference—Business and Economic Strategies for Teens. The program, cosponsored by the Missouri Council of Economic Education with support from the Cray Foundation, used a quiz-bowl format. It taught about the economy to a "cross section of young people." Black says his staff also is working with the University of Missouri at Kansas City and others to study the job skills that will be needed for tomorrow's work. Then Kansas City Extension will work to help local organizations restructure their curricula to provide that training.

Saving energy also ranked high in Kansas City. Gail Imig, associate dean and director of Extension home economics, says retrofitting makes older homes more efficient. "Retrofitting" can range from insulating windows to adding greenhouses "to try to make passive solar heating more functional." The first step, says Imig, is an energy audit to identify "heat loss zones."

Glenda Kinder, area specialist, then developed an energy audit booklet and a videotape for airing over local cable television. It "walks people through" an energy audit of two older homes. The UMKC Communications Department produced the video. After training people to do their own audits, Kansas City specialists plan to train them to insulate and retrofit their own homes. Plans call for as may as three more teaching programs for cable television.

Early Planners for the Future

This kind of formal planning isn't new to Missouri. The state's first published area plan, completed in southeast Missouri's Bootheel, dates back to 1966. Since that time more than 30 plans were developed for the state's 21 geographic areas.



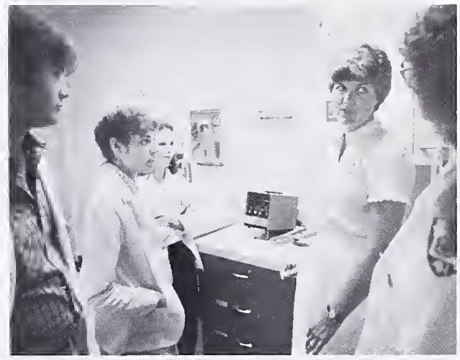
Extension is helping authorities to involve citizens in the fight to curb crime. Here, at a special anticrime exhibit a police officer displays a case with drug paraphernalia.

In the first, Bootheel farmers set Extension's directions on growing cotton. Now Extension planning encompasses Missouri's broad range of expertise. Besides such traditional disciplines as agriculture, the Show-Me State offers field specialists in continuing education for professionals, business and industry development, and in community development and local government. Specialists in those last two disciplines can assist communities in doing self-study surveys that aid in the planning process. All are part of Missouri's Cooperative Extension network, says Director Leonard Douglas.

Naturally, Douglas sees the purpose of these plans as drawing direction from the people they serve.

"You have to get to people talking about their own counties" for the planning process to work, says Douglas. That means tangible goals that people can achieve. If a goal is identified "by the people themselves, it's identified in terms of what it takes to reach it. It brings commitment."

Top: Skyline of Kansas City reveals trucks loaded with produce moving past elevators along the Missouri River. Above: Grain prices are scrutinized by brokers at the Kansas City Board of Trade.



Kansas City 4-H'ers in a teen program learn first-hand about careers in medicine. At the Lakeside Hospital in south Kansas City an emergency room nurse chats with the youth about her various duties.

Nationwide Extension uses grass-roots direction for its programs. In Missouri those local results can have a statewide impact—and vice versa—as Extension staff work to integrate state and area plans.

Kansas City Planners

In Kansas City that process was rather straightforward. Tom Hill, director of 4-H youth programs for Missouri, met with Black and the region's youth staff to mesh their local plans with two national one's—Extension in the 1980's and the national needs assessment done for 4-H by North Carolina State University. Tom Henderson, director of Misouri's business and industry program, says Kansas City's planning resulted in a "nearly perfect mesh" between the economic concerns there and his program's major thrusts.

For instance, a $75,000 grant from the Economic Development Administration helped extend the individual counseling Extension offers Missouri business owners. In Kansas City alone, Henderson reports that brought in roughly $115,000 in new investment and the program saved two jobs and created four more. Projections for the state include more than 400 jobs saved, more than 250 new ones created, and new investments tallying as much as $8¼ million.

Advisory Committees

However, not all direction for Extension in Missouri comes from area plans. Advisory committees, beginning with those that work with Douglas and with the university system president, James C. Olson, also play a major role.

Advisory committees also help set directions in home economics, youth, agriculture, and in Henderson's business and industry and continuing education programs. Perhaps the most structured of those approaches is used in home economics. Gail Imig explains: "Planning starts at the county level. Advisory committees work with each Extension home economist to identify local needs. These are funneled through Extension's field staff representatives who identify key needs across the state for their corresponding academic departments. Teleconferencing, first within a region to give the local representative a broad perspective and then among the areas and regions, helps supply background to these representatives so they can set priorities at a campus meeting each December." (A "region" usually is comprised of two or three Extension "areas." Each area might include from three to 10 counties.)

Local planning and needs are taken into account in those first meetings and throughout the process. Then Imig works to integrate all this planning into a master plan that takes Extension's national plan into account. Members from each of the program advisory committees sit on an overall committee together with a representative for the Extension Homemakers Program and one for the Expanded Food and Nutrition Program.

Below: Improving reproductive efficiency in hog and livestock production is an important part of Extension's commodity planning efforts. Here, swine producers Jim and Lois Phillips of Drexel, Missouri, get tips on the latest equipment to improve their weekly farrowing schedule.

Together, they integrate national trends and guidelines with what the staff knows about Missouri families and the latest research findings. Then Imig says they "negotiate" the thrusts of their statewide home economics program for the year. Area staff adapt them to their areas and regions.

Other Planning Efforts

Besides the area planning process used by all Extension, the college of agriculture gets direction from two other planning efforts. Charles E. Campbell, assistant director for agricultural Extension, led in one—commodity planning.

Because that planning concentrates on a commodity on a one-time basis, Campbell observes, "You get involvement from leadership who won't participate in the more long-term approach of Extension councils. Therefore, you get some ideas you wouldn't get otherwise." Reaching those new people was "one of the satisfactions for me," Campbell says.

The purpose of the commodities planning effort is to identify research problems. Still, Campbell says, Extension plays a strong role. Field specialists worked to make people aware of the hearings and to encourage attendance. An Extension specialist convened every commodity hearing. University researchers provided situation statements. Then an audience, totaling roughly 1,600 Missourians over 11 locations, responded with their needs and priorities.

They covered 14 commodities, ranging from such traditional ones as corn and beef to horses, cotton, rice and tobacco.

The other planning approach, "Food for the 21st Century," involved lengthy discussions among university social and biological scientists and scientists in the agribusiness industry. The scientists agreed that much current research just shows that things *do* happen. But to make further progress in plant and animal growth they needed to learn more about *why* and *how* things happen.

Consequently, for long-term planning, the scientists agreed the university should deal with "very basic research and abstract knowledge needs." They cited "the genetic manipulation of plants and animals." But even that ties in with the commodities planning process. Livestock producers also wanted to improve reproductive efficiency. So Campbell concludes the two plans "were not totally discrete."

Why should Extension be involved in setting research directions? Sanders, associate dean and director of agricultural Extension, observes that Extension involvement in both these research planning efforts fits well with the area specialist's role.

Top: Extension in Missouri has played a major role in assisting neighborhoods to rehabilitate housing. Above: Local parks have been the sites of successful crime watch programs.

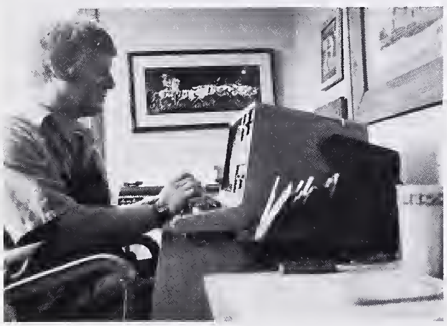
"That's what makes Extension unique, it delivers research-based information," he says.

However good Missouri's area planning system is, it's not foolproof. Both Douglas and Sanders would like to do more to get the directions set in area planning worked into Missouri's statewide structure.

"Locally, they can plan their programs fairly well," Sanders says, "because we have area specialists with great technical competency. But the weakness appears to be the translation of the plan to the state specialist."

The director of agricultural Extension continues, "At least there doesn't seem to be the direct mechanism to make sure that the flows of information come together. We would be remiss, if we didn't

Missouri livestock producers such as Charles Kinney of Liberty Bell Farm appreciate the benefits of Extension's research-based information. Kinney, (right) president of Missouri's Red Angus Association, proudly shows off a prize-winning bull.



Martin Phillips uses a personal computer to help the family firm keep track of the 8,000 hogs marketed each year.

consider the local plans." Sanders continues, "If the project in animal science is going to be able to assist, there needs to be the opportunity for flow of that information back and forth."

Problems and Solutions

Another problem is tight funding—a problem faced by Extension everywhere. The state's 21 areas have been going through a grassroots planning process every 5 years. That means four or five plans every year. To cut down on that burden and on other administrative costs, Douglas is moving Missouri Extension to a nine-region structure. County and area planning would continue, Douglas says, but formal, 5-year planning would be done by an entire region.

All this planning generates another concern for Sanders—that the planning document itself might become an edict. "Planning is a process of self examination," he says, "and the documentation that results from that can be a guide, but not the sole basis on which you perform. It has to be flexible." If it's inflexible, Sanders says, "you're a victim of the plan."

So he would like to see the area plans informally updated every year. The former field entomologist believes that would make them more flexible and keep staffs tuned to their major directions and to current conditions. Yearly updates also would make formal documentation and modification of a regional plan, every 5 years, "a fairly easy proposition." Sanders suggests letting "the planning process generate the thoughts, the ideas, the innovations" and following them "as closely as you possibly can," but altering that plan as things change.

Does all this planning work?

Well it seems to, but not always the same way. The smaller staff working in the business and industry and in the continuing education programs precludes those specialists from meeting with advisory committees in every county. So Henderson's continuing education specialists use a series of ad-hoc, or "self destructing" committees. They meet to set up programs by a subject, such as health care, and then stop meeting once a program is in place to meet those needs.

John Henschke used that approach to organize a five-session course on sex education. It reached more than 250 parents and their children in Maryville and in Albany in northwest Missouri. The continuing education specialist worked with child and family development specialist Diana Bonner to defuse this potentially explosive topic and set up the course.

"The key to success is offering such a course was making the program noncontroversial by building a foundation of endorsement and support within the community," Henschke observed. To do that, Henschke and Bonner contacted teachers, school administrators, the Nodaway County Ministerial Fellowship and others. Then the two Extension specialists sought the endorsement of local civic groups by describing the program's approach and value.

"The basic concept behind the course is to make the parent the primary source for human sexuality information," said course instructor Jean Brown, Family Guidance Center at St. Joseph.

A train-the-trainer approach added 76 new instructors to the St. Joseph program. Last spring they reached other communities in northwestern Missouri and nearby Iowa with it. And the national Public Broadcasting System will televise highlights early in 1984 as part of a seven-part series called "Your Child, My Children."

The idea of moving government decisionmaking back to the people caught on with the Extension Service—nationally—decades ago. Missouri just shows how much. □

Remedy for Stored Grain Spoilage

Marlene Fritz
Agricultural Information Specialist, CES
University of Idaho

Five years ago, the Idaho Feed and Grain Association approached the University of Idaho College of Agriculture with concerns about stored grain spoilage. Growers in southeastern Idaho were losing up to 5 percent of their crop—$10 million annually.

To be responsive to their clientele, a UI research agricultural engineer and an Extension entomologist in a 3-year research project showed that aeration could eliminate nearly all stored grain losses in the region. Nor would costly, and often ineffective, chemical grain protectants be necessary.

Demonstration Bins
This year, University of Idaho staff made 5 grain-filled demonstration bins available and electronically monitored aeration systems were provided by project funds.

Cooperator Donald Trupp of Newdale, involved in the project since its inception says, "We were looking at this sort of thing 5 or 6 years ago because we wanted to know what was going on. We knew we were having trouble.

"The UI people have done a good job and have been very receptive to our needs."

Broad Based Support
The project has attracted broad support within the university and the client groups Extension serves. According to Ray Prigge, director of agricultural programs in southeastern Idaho for the UI College of Agriculture: "We've drawn professionals from across functional lines to develop a consensus of need and a program of action.

"Very significant is the involvement of four farmers, a researcher, two Extension specialists, seven county agents, a district director, the Great Western Malting Co., Anheuser-Busch, Coors, the Idaho Wheat Growers, the Idaho Wheat Commission, county wheat growers' groups, county commissioners, a commercial grain elevator, local agribusiness firms and USDA Integrated Pest Management staff."

Prigge hopes that, after successful demonstration, evaluation, and adoption by southwestern Idaho clientele, the program will be used elsewhere in the country.

Lynn Murdock, Bingham County cooperator, reports that his friends and neighbors are showing increasing interest. "Nobody is ready to spend the money if it's just something to keep them from climbing up the outside of the bin. But once they find out that the technology can do something for them—like keep insects out and raise their profits—then they'll do it," he says.

Series of Meetings Lead to Project
The research project resulted from a series of meetings across southeastern Idaho in 1978 at which growers, field representatives, elevator operators, and county agents heard technical presentations and discussed the problem. They agreed that UI scientists should probe the extent of the losses, their causes, and their remedies.

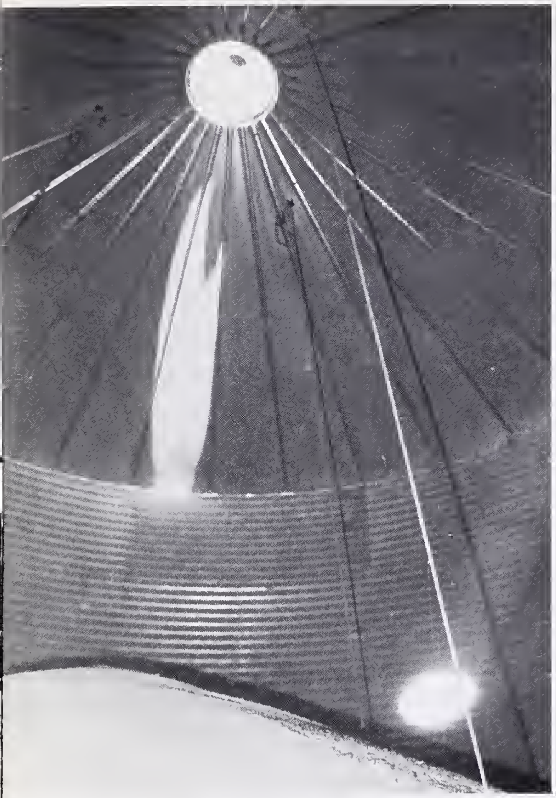
By 1981, ag engineer James Halderson and Extension entomologist Larry Sandvol had determined that USDA recommendations favoring chemical grain protectants did not apply.

The region's cool nights—generally falling below the 60-degree Fahrenheit minimum required for egg-laying by most insects—eliminated the threat of high insect populations when aeration systems were conscientiously used.

Halderson estimates that fewer than 1 in 10 southern Idaho grain growers used aeration systems while "substantial numbers" applied grain protectants. The initial cost of electronically monitored aeration systems is $400 to $1,500, and they are inexpensive to operate.

Halderson and Sandvol found that grain protectants actually may contribute to storage losses by giving a false sense of security.

"The top center part of the bin is where you're most likely to find grain insects during the colder winter months, and that's where heat and moisture tend to break down the grain protectants," Halderson says.



Spoilage of stored grain in southeastern Idaho totals about $10 million in losses to growers annually. The remedy appears to be aeration. A 3-year research project by the University of Idaho College of Agriculture, involving Extension specialists and professionals from many disciplines, showed that aeration systems are vastly more successful cutting grain losses than costly chemical grain protectants. The project used 5 grain-filled demonstration bins that were electronically monitored.

When the research was completed, Halderson, Sandvol, and Prigge—along with agricultural economist Joseph Guenthner and county agents Brian Finnigan, Sterling Schow, Cecil Alldaffer and James Whitmore—met to weigh ideas on how to expedite technology transfer. Settling on farm-based demonstrations, they proposed the concept to industry groups and clientele in November and December 1982.

Positive Response

The response was overwhelmingly positive. All key groups declared the educational program to be a high-priority need.

Local agribusiness firms volunteered equipment and installation services. Four local farmers and one commercial grain elevator owner donated the use of their round, steel bins for instrumentation and demonstration. In addition to Murdock and Trupp, the cooperators include Doyal Stiles of Caribou County, Kenneth Koompin of Power County and David Reinke of Fremont County.

Anheuser-Busch, Coors, and Great Western Malting Co. provided $9,000 for the research. Seed money of $1,000 for the demonstration came from the Anheuser-Busch Malt Barley Growers Association. U.S. Integrated Pest Management funds of $22,000 were obtained through UI IPM specialist Edward Bechinski.

In addition to providing bin instrumentation and staff travel, the funds will be used to develop educational packages, including seven publications in the Current Information Series, slide-tape sets, a 20-minute public service TV program, and 5 to 10 public service announcements.

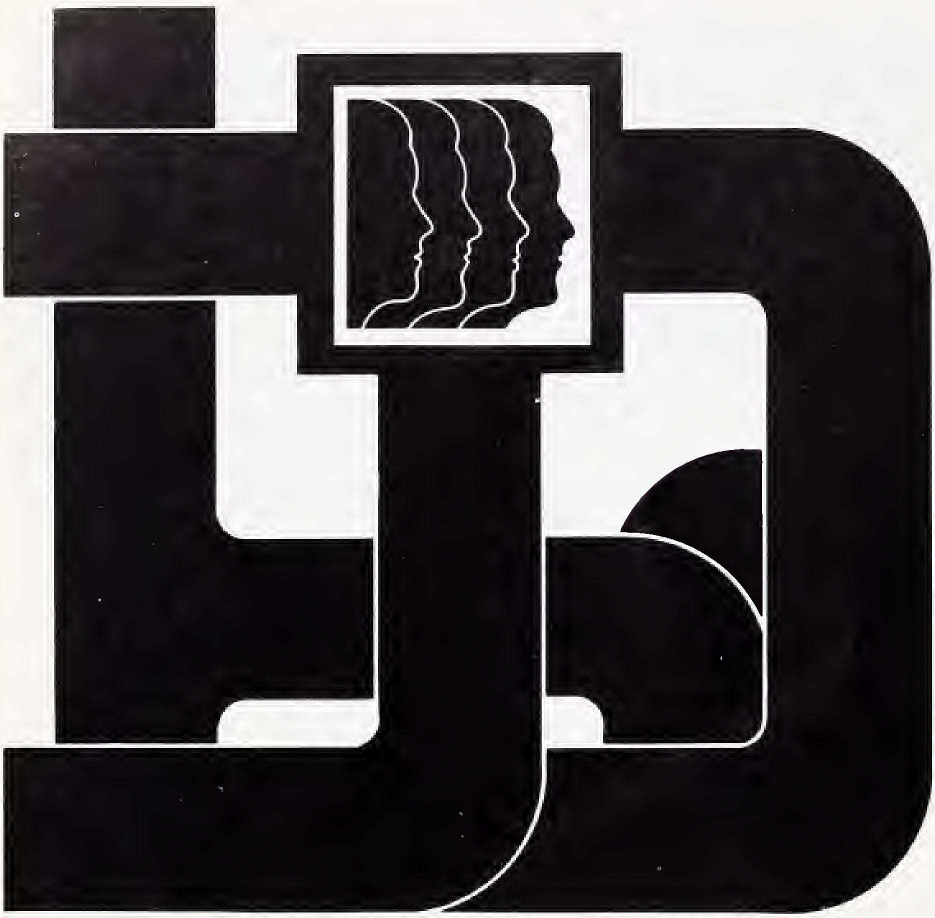
On May 10 and 12, 1983, a 20-minute videotape on the grain bin demonstration was broadcast on Pocatello television.

Growers saw the project this summer through tours led by county agents. One of these tours was sponsored by the National Association of Wheat Growers.

"This is what we had in mind," said cooperator Trupp. "It's a really good example of working toward a common goal. And an example of accountability to users and ongoing evaluation in action." □

The Performance Appraisal Connection

Peter Warnock
Extension District Director
University of Florida, Gainesville



Both agent performance appraisal and program evaluation attempt to measure the success of Extension work. One assesses process, the other the finished product. Extension programs are to an agent what a cake is to a cook or a house to a carpenter. For these professionals to evaluate process without evaluating the product would be woefully inadequate, leaving them with too many unanswered questions.

Florida Cooperative Extension was deeply involved in strengthening their program planning and evaluation practices when two closely related occurrences added impetus to their efforts. Roger Neiswinder, Seminole County Administrator, laid out the challenge to Extension faculty in 1981 when he asked them to account for their actions by answering three questions: What are you doing? How are you doing it? What difference are you making?

Questions 1 and 2 were relatively easily answered, whereas little could be said in response to question 3.

At about the same time, motivation to change came from a state legislative oversight committee, which probed deeply into the programs, practices and policies of the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. Like Neiswinder, state legislators also were asking the question—"What difference are you making?"

Means/Ends Dichotomy

Extension program evaluation and personnel performance appraisals have always been closely related. As Extension agents know, to conduct a comprehensive and meaningful program review without addressing agent performance is almost impossible.

By and large, internal managers, like Extension agents, cooks, and carpenters continue to be concerned with both ends and means. Competition for tax dollars, however, has made the ends more important to external evaluators. These judges are like the restaurant's customer who judges the cake by its appearance, taste, and cost or the home buyer who analyzes a home purchase on the basis of its utility, attractiveness, cost, and projected resale. The means used by the cook and carpenter are of little concern to the buyer of these products. Because of their limited time and expertise, they are primarily interested in the final product and its relative value.

Means to the Extension agent provide internal measures necessary to improve program performance. In the mid-1970's, the American Institute for Research, under contract with the Extension Service, USDA, established that successful Extension agents are proficient in program planning, program promotion and public relations, program implementation, gaining program support, interpersonal/personal relations and supervision. Only through careful attention to these means of doing business can new and experienced agents hope to achieve excellence in their work. They, like superior cooks and carpenters, must be able to understand and evaluate both the means and ends which affect their work.

Agent Expectations

Making the intellectual shift in program evaluation and performance appraisal from means to program ends is not easy. The National Accountability and Evaluation System (A/E) facilitates emphasis on final product as reflected in 4-year major programs. Many Florida faculty are optimistic about potential benefits to them and their clients. Following are a few of their solicited expectations:

Marion County home economics program leader Jenta Wyatt believes that agents will gain increased *satisfaction and recognition* from 4-year major programs as compared to annually planned programs of lesser consequences.

Ryan—district director—is convinced that Extension's potential *survival* in Florida depends on effectively measuring and reporting clientele benefits in specific measurable terms.

"The new A/E system *maintains individual expression.* Extension program development is still a bottom-up planning process which begins at the county level," says Jesse Godbold, Clay County Extension director. "State and national data collection and analyses could help Florida agents do a better job by seeing what others are doing with similar programs around the country."

"My problem has always been not having enough time to adequately plan, implement, and evaluate programs," says Uday Yadav, Orange County horticultural agent. "It appears that the 4-year planning cycle gives us *more time* to negotiate, modify, and gather data to determine with confidence if we did make a difference in the lives and/or businesses of our clientele."

Marcia Crocker, 4-H program leader, sees 4-year program plans as a means of putting more *objectivity and fairness* into performance appraisals. In her view, "a 4-year major program requires a clear understanding on the part of the agent and supervisor as to what will be done; how it will be done; and what difference it will make."

Barriers to Overcome

The new A/E system could fail if agent behavior remains unchanged. Habit gives predictability to work and play which is indispensable, but it can also seriously weaken an individual or organization in transition. The challenge facing Florida's agents, specialists, and volunteers is to shift attention to program ends by spending more quality time in planning and evaluating Extension programs. This change will require considerable ego strength and self-discipline since it moves counter to the temperament of most agents. For example, Extension agents are known as "doers," who enjoy seeing things happen! Typically, agents prefer to write, teach, demonstrate, and counsel. Four-year major programs undoubtedly will require more time and effort to plan and evaluate programs, probably at the expense of these preferred tasks and activities.

Performance appraisals and program evaluations can be emotional and disheartening experiences. With few exceptions, adults don't like to be reviewed, analyzed, compared, or evaluated. Therefore, the new A/E system, with increased emphasis on evaluation of program results (ends), carries with it a threat to one's professional standing. In this era of accountability, agents must be able to rise above these legitimate concerns by using elements of the A/E system which are designed to provide sufficient time to adequately plan and evaluate programs, using objective and fair means, while maintaining individual expression.

Florida Practice

Florida Cooperative Extension has anticipated the current emphasis on program ends in its program evaluation and performance appraisal practices. For the past two program years, agents have been primarily appraised on the basis of measured changes in client knowledge, skills, attitudes, aspirations, practices, and/or behaviors. Faculty from the Program Evaluation and Organizational Development Unit, along with program deans and district directors have conducted extensive training on planning, evaluating, and reporting major programs. Departmental Extension specialists, Extension faculty at many of the state's 23 research centers, and agents received this instruction which re-emphasizes the importance of program ends in the program development process. Effecting change in the professional ranks is difficult, time consuming, and at times discouraging, but major substantive programs are beginning to appear and be implemented.

Program means and ends continue to be the fundamental components of program evaluation and performance appraisal. Emphasis in 1984 is on the question, "What difference are you making?" Florida agents, specialists, and volunteers are preparing to answer this question through their 4-year major programs and performance appraisal system which focuses on program ends. There is a sense of optimism that they will be able to justify their existence as part of a national educational system with proven ability to adjust, adapt, and go with the flow. □

Energy For Oregon—An Evaluation Effort

Joyce Patterson,
Extension Communications Specialist, Energy
Oregon State University, Corvallis

The Oregon State University Extension energy program was new. And most of the energy agents and the only full-time energy specialist were also new to Extension. It was important to evaluate our efforts from the start—to see if what we were doing and how we were doing it actually helped people save energy.

That was in 1980. Now, 3½ years later, we can report results of three major, formal evaluations and many less formal ones along the way. And we have five more formal evaluations in process.

It was important for professionals to help our evaluation efforts. None of us knew how to conduct evaluations. First, we hired Communication Design in Seattle to hold an evaluation workshop for us. Next, we contracted with the Survey Research Center at Oregon State University (OSU) to help us conduct three major, scientifically designed evaluations. Smaller ongoing evaluations we do ourselves.

What have we learned? The answer to this question can be divided into two parts: What we've learned about evaluation and what we've learned about our programs.

Evaluation—Why?
We learned that evaluation is an attempt to determine what happened because of a particular program. And we learned that building evaluation into a program from the beginning improves that program. The evaluation process forces us to set goals and to plan activities that are specific, attainable, measurable, and pertinent in order to reach those goals.

Program evaluation has many forms. For example, take an Extension bulletin. Before anyone on the energy faculty writes a manuscript, we discuss together the need for a bulletin on that topic, availability of similar bulletins, and the use we see for the bulletin. Before we send a manuscript to an editor, we ask experts in the appropriate field to review it. We also ask other Extension workers to review it. That's all part of evaluation.

Publication Evaluation
For a more formal, scientific evaluation of a specific publication, we contracted with the OSU Survey Research Center. Their activities range from consultation to handling all parts of a survey.

The publication evaluated was written by two of our energy agents. Its topic—solar water heating—included an explanation of different systems, the need for other conservation measures, and consumer protection information.

From questions suggested by the energy staff, the Survey Research Center developed a telephone questionnaire. Readers of the publication were asked to evaluate its relevance and helpfulness. These readers were also quizzed about their hot water energy conservation awareness, knowledge, and behavior.

Survey results indicated that 9 out of 10 of those who received the publication read at least some of it; that three-quarters of the readers found that it provided the kind of information they expected when they requested it, that it helped 86 percent of the readers make decisions to take conservation measures, and that 7 percent of the readers installed a solar water heating system within 6 months following receipt of the publication.

Workshop Evaluation
Our workshops deliver energy conservation information to the public. At the end of each workshop, participants fill out a form evaluating that particular session. From these evaluations, we learned that 6-hour workshops are too long. Workshops that are 3 or 4-hours long are better.

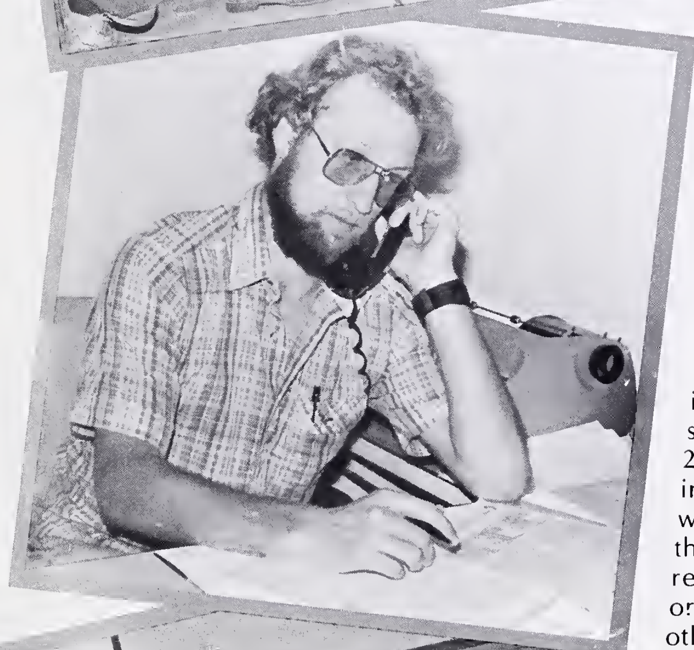
The Survey Research Center also evaluated one series of workshops—those conducted in the Portland metropolitan area on solar water heating. In fact, we had them do two evaluations of these workshops. And we're planning a third.

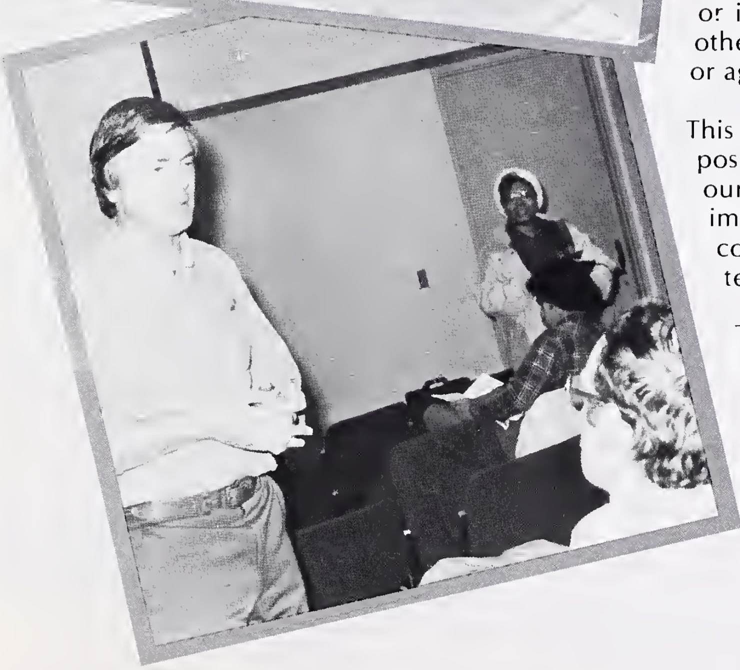
Because the first survey found that 15 percent of the first-year participants installed solar water heating within the year and 75 percent more intended to do so, we did a followup survey the next year. By then, 23 percent had installed and 56 percent still intended to do so. The next followup survey is targeted at this 56 percent to see if they've followed through with their intentions.

Telephone Consultation Evaluation
Our staff spends a great deal of time on the telephone answering energy-related questions, so we decided to see how effective this delivery method really is.

For 6 months we recorded names, addresses, the nature of the inquiry, and our response.

The Survey Research Center helped us develop a mail questionnaire that included items concerning the kinds of conservation measures people called about, action they had taken (and when), energy savings they had realized, the type of information they had requested, the extent to which their needs for information had been met, how helpful the





information had been in saving energy, and any other organizations they had contacted for similar help.

Their answers showed that of the people who called, about 60 percent had taken some conservation measure(s), 30 percent within 8 months following the phone call. About two-thirds of those who took conservation measures noticed a reduction in energy consumption. And of these, 73 percent found the information they received from Extension very helpful in enabling them to save energy. Another 26 percent found the information some what helpful. Fewer than half the callers requested similar help or information from other organizations or agencies.

This response was positive enough that our staff decided it is important to continue answering telephone inquiries.

These three major evaluations cost about $10,000, with funding coming from a U.S. Department of Energy grant.

We're now working with the Survey Research Center in evaluating five more programs:

- The followup, previously mentioned, to the solar water heating workshops that will show how many participants actually installed a solar water heating system.

- A survey of clients who were unable to attend one of our solar water heating workshops but requested the construction/installation manual that we distribute at the workshops. This evaluation will show how useful the manual is alone.

- A monthly newsletter on energy topics that is written by one of the energy agents and mailed to about 800 people. From this we hope to learn how recipients use the newsletter and if it helps them make energy-conserving decisions.

- A project in which we are using the multiplier effect by working through volunteers. In this project, the agent arranged with the county health department for sanitarians to suggest and demonstrate low-flow shower heads to hotels and motels when the sanitarians make their regular twice-a-year inspections. The evaluation will be designed to show how much energy is being saved as a result of this effort.

- A followup to the survey on the telephone inquiries we receive. As part of this evaluation we will obtain before-and-after utility records of those who said they took energy conservation measures as a result of the information we provided.

The utility records will show how much energy these measures save. □

Resident Program Aides Make a Difference

Gloria J. Boyd
Extension Communications Specialist
Prairie View A&M University, Texas

During the past eleven years, 1890 Extension programs have demonstrated that paraprofessionals are extremely effective in reaching non-traditional clientele. This has indeed been the case for the 1890 Extension program in Texas; paraprofessionals continue to be the glue of its one-on-one concept.

The paraprofessionals, also referred to as program aides, working with the Cooperative Extension Program at Prairie View A&M University in Texas, serve as catalysts in helping non-traditional clientele become aware of and adopt new self-improvement practices.

The paraprofessionals' effectiveness is due to the fact that they, themselves are selected from the clientele group they intend to help. County agents, with the help of program specialists, identify a person who is a resident of the county he expects to serve. They look for people who have the ability to gain acceptance in their respective communities. Paraprofessionals come from diverse backgrounds such as ministers, farmers, and community leaders.

Supervised By County Agents
The paraprofessionals are employed directly by the 1890 program, but work under the supervision of a designated county Extension agent of the 1862 Extension Service. The paraprofessionals receive training and backup support for Extension specialists and faculty members from both Prairie View A&M University and the Texas Agricultural Extension Service.

Since the paraprofessionals come from similar backgrounds as their clientele they can often readily identify the needs of this group. Additional areas of need for limited income families are identified by program specialists, county Extension agents and of course, the target audience themselves. The paraprofessionals attend training sessions at Prairie View A&M University and also in the county and district offices on a periodic basis. These sessions, conducted by program specialists in coordination with county agents keep the program aides up-to-date on subject matter to transfer to their clientele. Several publications, specifically designed for limited income audiences, are shown to the program aides at the training sessions so they can share them with their target audience.

Training
Since there are four areas of emphasis in the 1890 Extension Program in Texas—agriculture, home economics, community development, and 4-H and youth—the program aides receive varying amounts of training according to the demand and frequency of change in each program area. For example, the home economics component may emphasize nutrition one month and the displaced homemaker the next. The 4-H and youth component may have a continuous effort of helping limited income youth become productive citizens.

Once the program aides have been selected and trained, they are ready to employ the one-on-one concept in reaching non-traditional clientele. Paraprofessionals make farm, home, or community visits to their clientele on a weekly basis. The paraprofessionals are able to talk to the clientele on a one-on-one basis, using the common language or jargon that is familiar to the people. This helps the limited resource individual or family relax and gain confidence in the paraprofessionals. Once this confidence is established, helping the individual or family in whatever their needs are is less complicated.

Accomplishments
The 1890 Extension paraprofessionals in Texas have been instrumental in helping families and individuals weatherize houses, install water systems in communities, grow their own vegetables, help small farm pond owners produce and market over 300,000 pounds of catfish, obtain medical assistance, and secure employment for youth.

In some instances, paraprofessionals work with other agencies and organizations who are better able to handle certain target audience concerns. This brings about a good working relationship between Extension and other agencies.

Paraprofessionals are also instrumental in identifying volunteer leaders who are very important to the success of the 1890 Extension Program in Texas. Since the program has begun, volunteer leaders have secured meeting places, helped organize youth clubs, served as translators, and assisted in camping projects.

To determine the effectiveness of the program aides and their impact on limited income audiences, the paraprofessionals keep an individual file on each person in their clientele

Resident program aides are proving to be extremely effective reaching non-traditional clientele in the 1890 Extension program in Texas. Whether helping small livestock producers, demonstrating canning techniques to youths, or helping families grow their own vegetables, resident program aides are proving the one-on-one concept works.

group. This helps them maintain a record on their clientele's progress. Paraprofessionals also make monthly followup visits to their clientele to check on their progress.

The paraprofessionals are also expected to work with building and advisory committees to plan programs for limited income clientele. These committees help the program aides keep abreast of educational activities to be conducted in their respective counties.

Monthly Reports

Monthly contact reports are also prepared by the paraprofessionals which indicate the number of persons they contact on a monthly basis and also identifies the sex, racial and ethnic groups of the clientele. Monthly narrative reports are done by the program aides in which detailed information is given on the activities they have conducted with their specific target audiences for each month.

Not only have the paraprofessionals been effective in assisting limited income audiences, they have also benefited themselves. Several program aides have furthered their education and secured Extension work. Others have received recognition for their work. Recently, one paraprofessional working with the agricultural component received an outstanding service award from the 1890 Extension Program in Texas for his work in assisting small farmers. These are just a few accomplishments made by the paraprofessionals.

The paraprofessionals, through the use of the one-on-one concept in assisting limited income audiences, will continue to live up to the Extension philosophy, "Helping People to Help Themselves." □

Tennessee Turns To TIS

Cecil E. Carter, Jr.
Professor of Agricultural Extension Education
University of Tennessee

The Tennessee Information System (TIS) is a statewide approach used in Tennessee to obtain, analyze, and use survey data from Extension clientele and Weekly Activity Reports (WAR) required from staff as part of the Tennessee Extension Management Information System (TEMIS). Program planners use TIS as an aid in program planning, monitoring, and evaluating impacts. TIS provides two types of data: clientele inputs and program operations—within all major subject matter areas. Data on program outcomes are generated by synthesizing the other two types of data.

TIS attempts to provide the information needed to carry out each step in the program development process successfully. The idea is that optimal execution of program planning, implementation, and evaluation depends at least partly on the quality and utility of information from TIS.

Major Components of TIS

In TIS, clientele information represents the environmental conditions and behaviors of a target audience at a given point in time. They reflect the learning, growth, development, and potential for improvement of this target group in a particular planning or subject matter area. County Extension agents obtain the information through personal interviews with persons selected at random within a particular target audience.

Data on Extension educational program operations in Tennessee come from the TEMIS Weekly Activity Reports. They help answer questions such as how many clients there are in a given target audience and what kind of services they receive.

Program outcomes refer to progress toward meeting the objectives of the educational program. Outcomes data are obtained from clientele inputs data. Traditional descriptions used in TIS have been changes in conditions and behaviors of the group (such as change in practices used, change in yield per acre or per animal unit).

Developing Programs

Tennessee Extension staff develop programs through (a) identifying problems, (b) specifying long-range (4-year) objectives, and (c) designing program strategy and actions to be taken. Eight separate processes can be identified and discussed briefly.

First, the social values of the client group and the legislative mandates to Extension must be understood. Second, Extension staff study environmental conditions and the behavioral situation of the client group to see to what degree their desired values are being achieved and Extension's legislative mandates are being fulfilled. Third, in needs assessment, the desired conditions and behaviors for the client group are compared with existing conditions and behaviors. The gap between desired and actual conditions and behaviors is the inferred need or problem.

Based on inferred needs or problems, the Extension staff identify the level of achievement (amount of change in conditions or behaviors) aimed at over a 4-year period, the fourth step or process.

From the program planning portion of TIS, Extension staff move into designing and implementing strategies to bring about the specified changes in the environment or behaviors of the client group—process five. Extension staff work closely with county agriculture committees, who approve all new staff and programs, and, in some counties, work also with study groups, commodity groups, and other lay leadership. In the sixth step, to learn program outcomes, Extension staff obtain data from each of the other data base components in TIS—clientele inputs and program operations.

The seventh process or step, is to evaluate impacts of programs, and the final step or eighth process involves communication and use of impact evaluation information internally.

Not a New Idea

Basically, this description of TIS and uses of TIS is an effort to explain how Tennessee has dovetailed routine staff reporting (TEMIS) with systematic clientele surveys to produce a more comprehensive approach to data collection than had been used before. These data are complementary and provide the basis for analysis and evaluation of the program development process and program outcomes.

Uses of TIS

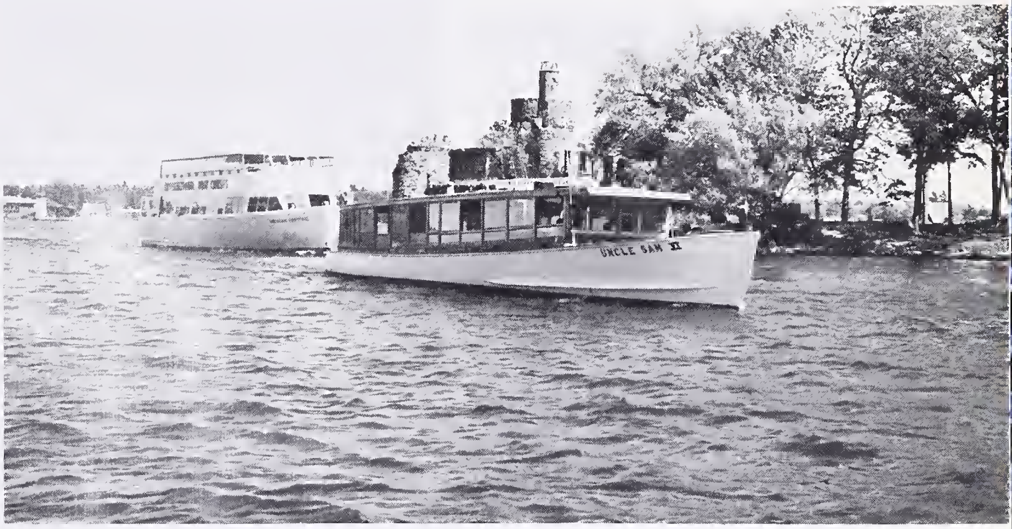
Program evaluation, as viewed in TIS, includes obtaining, analyzing, interpreting, feedback, and application of information about clientele inputs, program operations, and program outcomes for purposes of program planning, program monitoring, and program impact evaluation. Thus, program evaluation takes place throughout the development of programs. TIS provides data for evaluation purposes before, during, and after programs are implemented, on a continuing basis, for all major subject matter areas.

TIS can be described as a data bank system. Data about staff inputs into Extension programs are available continually, summarized for program planning, analyzed to help monitor programs, and used to look at the relationships among clientele inputs, program operations and program outcome. The result is a systems approach to Extension program planning, implementation, and evaluation. □

Programing Tomorrow's Tourists

Michael W. Duttweiler
New York Sea Grant Extension Program Coordinator
and
Michael P. Voiland
Regional Specialist
New York Sea Grant Extension Program
Cornell University, Ithaca, New York

Longer range planning and needs assessment implicitly involves projecting the future from current situations. It is exceptionally difficult to draw upon past experiences and current situation descriptions without becoming trapped in existing assumptions. We attempted an experiment in Extension program planning which included distinct efforts to break from preconceived assumptions. This program planning is meant as a supplement to formal needs assessment—not as a substitute for it.



The Situation
Tourism development is viewed as a viable economic development component by many Great Lakes communities. In New York, the Sea Grant Extension Program of Cornell Cooperative Extension and the New York Sea Grant Institute have assisted lakeshore communities in dealing with the boons and banes of tourism over the past 10 years. Primary clientele include tourism businesses, chambers of commerce, and local governments.

By early 1980, Sea Grant and other staff with responsibilities in recreation and tourism development identified significant changes occurring in New York's coastal tourism industry. These changes were the result of shifts in economic climate and dramatic increases in tourism promotion and development. Careful planning on the part of Sea Grant was necessary to maintain high impact programs. An effective advisory committee system, statewide situation statements, and strong plans of work were in hand but we were uneasy about our preparedness.

We sought a way of looking at ourselves, our capabilities, and our client's needs through the window of the future.

The Approach
Initial efforts were important but hardly innovative. A dual-purpose staff workshop was conducted to review organizational strategies, structure, and emphases, and to initiate planning specifically for recreation and tourism. Sea Grant and Cornell Community Resource Development staff participated—a total of 15 persons.

At our first workshop we critiqued how well we were delivering programs. General suggestions for improvement followed—such as need for more effecive use of media and audience multipliers and for increased emphasis on leadership development. In a followup meeting Sea Grant staff translated these into a collective "contract", which specified methodological improvements to be incorporated in individual plans of work. These commitments were reinforced through regular review and discussion during performance review.

While not solely related to recreation and tourism, these organization improvement objectives played a key role in helping to identify shortcomings in our programs and make commitments to do something about them. A healthy climate had been established for our primary project—developing an effective plan of action for tourism programing.

The approach derived for planning community development efforts related to tourism took a deceptively simple form. The following items became our primary planning tools:

- Review and critique of past efforts;
- Organizational improvement objectives identified through workshops;
- "Futurescapes" for 1985.

Analyzing these items together should add up to our revised situation statement and goals for the 3 to 5 years.

Critique
The critique of past efforts included compilation and analysis of all plans of work dealing with recreation and tourism, review of annual reports, review of more than 25 existing program evaluations, and compilation of program resources such as research reports and teaching materials produced over the past

seven years. Each aspect was summarized in a 1 to 3 page discussion document. These sources distilled into a general sense of major program themes, successes and failures in each, program trends and present capabilities clarified through extensive discussion.

"Futurescapes" for 1985
Futurescapes, the only new item in the formula, were meant to be "mind openers" to help anticipate programing circumstances in the future. The five specialists with tourism-related responsibilities independently developed written projections of the 1985 climate for tourism along New York's Great Lakes. General topics assigned included tourist businesses, recreational participation, access development, and environmental quality. Each used a variety of predictive documents—such as travel and tourism trends—and a healthy dose of professional judgment. We purposely did not prescribe a uniform format—to avoid prejudicing the writers.

Staff investigated the regional tourism market in 1985 and how it would be affected by such projections as the decline in regional population, and less frequent and more selective recreational travel. The transportation topic contained projections for personal auto use and the development of more public transportation. Other topics included communication (supply of visitor information and availability of computerized travel information) and destination areas (the formation of tourism associations and the group packaging of tourist attractions).

The futurescapes then were synopsized through group discussion that focused on primary trends likely to influence our key clientele. The tourist trends predicted for the Lake Ontario area were changes in recreational and tourism leisure needs such as use of smaller boats, longer stays within an area, and increased emphasis on physical fitness exercises. Critical importance was noted for tourism packaging and coordinated promotion. And water use conflicts between boaters and anglers and between sport and commercial fishermen were projected as increasing.

Major Themes
The summary of futurescapes was used to reformulate our longer range goals for recreation and tourism related programs. The

mechanism was a third and final staff work session. Major themes that resulted were as follows:

- Knowledge about Lake Ontario recreational opportunities and associated technical and safety considerations typically is limited. For coastal tourism to be a true economic stimulus, such information must be readily available to a very broad population.

Program Implication: Increased use of media and multiplier organizations for distribution of recreation-related information.

- The economic role of tourism and the steps required for proper tourism management are poorly recognized by many coastal communities.

The New York Sea Grant Extension program has formulated long-range planning for tourist development in that state's Great Lakes. "Futurescapes" are the tourist specialists' way of anticipating programing circumstances in the future.

Program Implication: Tourism development programs must include a component aimed at clearly demonstrating economic impacts and management options.

● Efforts to expand use of coastal recreation resources while protecting their quality will require a broad constituency on their behalf.

Program Implication: Past educational programs that had emphasized angling interests must be expanded to a broader range of user groups.

● Existing marine trades facilities are inadequate to handle expected growth in need for recreational services.

Program Implication: Current efforts to assist marine trade businesses should be intensified, especially in the areas of business management and facilities design.

Specific organizational objectives and performance indicators were written for each theme by the program coordinator. These have served as primary tools for individual plan of work formulation and suggesting future research directions.

The Real Products

The planning documents generated were far from static. In the months after a "final" draft was prepared, significant modifications were made. Our detailed situation statement and program plan was revised and program strategies continue evolving.

In some ways, the key products of the process were outside the actual documents. Most importantly, everyone with major responsibility in our Great Lakes recreation and tourism programming had a direct and significant role in the review and planning process. Gains because of this corporate approach were:

● Discovery of a collective sense of purpose and direction in what had been a somewhat diffuse program unit.

● An increased willingness to shift from past program practices in anticipation of trends collectively identified.

● An increased ability to alert and counsel researchers about anticipated information needs.

● Creation of a broad framework for counseling staff in program development.

A New Consensus

An internal program planning procedure was described which utilized review of plans of work, annual reports, and program evaluations; organizational improvement objectives; and, futurescapes of program content five years hence. Needed program improvements were identified and resulted in extensive modification of plans of work and delivery strategy. The general procedures followed appear to be appropriate for a broad range of community development program planning situations. Perhaps the most significant outcome was staff consensus on program purposes and direction and increased willingness to critically evaluate efforts.

More detailed descriptions of procedures used and copies of key documents generated can be obtained from the authors as can copies of a formal survey of tourism businesses used to provide "outside" validation of trends identified by staff. This later project involving interviews with nearly 100 tourism industry leaders largely confirmed the "findings" of our internally generated futurescapes. It appears that major perceived needs of audiences can be effectively addressed through careful attempts to avoid dominance of current program assumptions. □

Sampling The Best

Michael Q. Patton
Program Director
Caribbean Agricultural Extension Project
University of Minnesota, St. Paul

Evaluating the Caribbean Agricultural Extension Project presents an interesting problem. The solution to that problem involves a purposeful sampling strategy that may be applicable in other Extension evaluation situations.

The problem: how to provide the United States Agency for International Development (AID) with information on the long-term potential impact of Extension in the Caribbean.

It is important to understand the situational context within which this issue is being addressed. In 1980, AID funded the Caribbean Agricultural Extension Project. The project is a joint endeavor between the University of the West Indies and the Midwest Universities Consortium for International Activities (MUCIA) with the University of Minnesota as the lead university.

During phase I, from 1980 to 1982, project staff worked with Ministry of Agriculture officials in eight Caribbean countries to evaluate the effectiveness of their Extension services and develop plans for national Extension improvement. The countries involved were Antigua, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts/Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent. In 1982, AID funded phase II which is aimed at implementation of the National Extension Improvement Plans developed in phase I.

Proving Cost-Effectiveness
Shortly after the signing of the phase II contract a conference was held for directors of AID missions in Latin America and the Caribbean. The dominant view at that meeting, as reported to project staff, was that funding Extension projects in developing countries was not an effective use of AID funds. It is in the context of this skepticism about the cost-effectiveness of agricultural Extension projects in developing countries that the Caribbean project was asked to provide data on the long-term potential of agricultural Extension in the Caribbean.

The immediate problem is that the Caribbean Agricultural Extension Project is an institution building effort aimed at improving national Extension services through training, consultation, staff development, and program planning. During the current life of the project from 1982 to 1985, it is fair to expect major changes in the organization and delivery of agricultural Extension, and such changes can be evaluated. However, impacts on farmers will be marginal during this period. Many of the Extension staff will not return from training until late in the life of the project. Because changes in organization are timed to occur gradually throughout the life of the project, it will take some time for measurable changes in Extension organization and delivery systems to show up in changed farmer practices.

How, then, can the question of long-term Extension effectiveness in the Caribbean be addressed? At this point no data exist on the parameters of potential Extension effectiveness. That is, there are no reliable data on Extension impact from which future projections of effectiveness can be made. However, a "purposeful" sampling strategy within the current life of the project makes it possible to provide data that can be used to establish the needed parameters of effectiveness. Such data can help answer the question of what can be expected from Extension development over time.

Measuring Maximum Impact
Purposeful sampling is a qualitative methods approach aimed at carefully selecting for study a small number of cases that will yield a great deal of information for policymaking purposes. The strategy adopted in this case is aimed at measuring the maximum impact that Extension might have under fairly ideal conditions.

The sampling strategy begins with identification in each participating country of an "outstanding agricultural Extension agent." The outstanding agent is identified through a nomination and selection process directed by the National Planning Committee for Extension established in each country during phase I of the project. These committees include farmers, representatives of farmer organizations, Ministry of Agriculture officials, agricultural researchers, and others with interests in agricultural development. Following selection of outstanding agents, they are asked to identify the five farm families with which they have worked most closely and on which they have had the greatest impact. Case studies will then be made of each of these families to establish the nature and extent of the Extension impact.

Sampling Strategy

This sampling strategy will yield forty cases where agricultural Extension has had an important impact in the Caribbean. This sample is purposefully biased to establish maximum likely impact, or to establish the outside ideal parameters for Extension effectiveness. It can be expected that the typical Extension agent will have somewhat less impact than outstanding agents. However, by gathering data about the ideal that *might* be obtained, it is possible to establish the maximum that could be expected as an increasing number of agents begin to operate in the area.

In effect, this evaluation will provide AID with information about the maximum potential long-term impact of agricultural Extension programs on farm families in the Caribbean. The data will establish an ideal for Extension Service effectiveness. That ideal, and projections downward from that ideal, can then be used in policy discussions to decide if the level of possible impact is worth attempting to attain through projects that improve agricultural Extension services.

This is an evaluation sampling strategy where bias is purposefully built in at every stage to increase the usefulness of the information obtained. The purposeful bias in this kind of sampling becomes a strength rather than a weakness because it provides important information for the policy process that would otherwise be unavailable.

To evaluate the Caribbean Extension Project a "purposeful" sampling strategy began by identifying an outstanding agricultural Extension agent in each of eight Caribbean countries. Here, Thomas H. Henderson, (right), project director, and director of Extension at the University of West Indies, congratulates Anthony Philgence of St. Lucia for being selected the outstanding Extension agent for the Extension Service of that country.

Data for Program Development

The evaluation will also provide indepth information about the practices and methods of outstanding Caribbean agents. This data will be used in training and in efforts aimed at promoting increased professionalism and pride among Caribbean Extension personnel. Thus, detailed case study descriptions of model agents and their Extension work with farm families will provide data not only for evaluation but also for future program development and training activities. □

Which Comes First—Problems Or Programs?

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Home Economics Program
Iowa State University, Ames

In Iowa, home economics advisory committees provide a rich source of information on people's needs and problems to use in planning Extension programs.

One role of the economist is to involve advisory committee members in the program planning process. How do you assist a committee in identifying families' needs?

Needs Assessment Study

Ideally, committee members are involved in fact-finding and advisory roles. A formalized needs assessment process could help staff and committee attain concrete information for program planning.

Linda Swenson, Extension home economist, conducted a study as part of her master's program in which volunteer advisory committee members assessed needs through a card sort technique. Swenson, in conjunction with committee members and Extension paraprofessionals, generated 30 problem statements in family living and food and nutrition. Problem statements were printed on small cards.

Swenson trained advisory committee members to interview clientele by use of the card sort technique. Each respondent selected his or her five major concerns from among the 30 cards and ranked these from the "greatest" to the "smallest" problem. Problems of greatest concern to clientele were used by Swenson and the committee to develop the home economics program.

The needs assessment became an action-oriented process. Committee members not only collected data upon which to build their program, but they also had direct contact with clientele in the county. Thus, the support base for Extension was extended. Clientele also had concrete statements to rank. The focus of this process was on *problems*, not *programs*. Programs became the end result of the needs assessment.

Another positive outcome was that advisory committee members felt ownership of the programs which evolved out of the needs assessment.

Needs Assessment Across The State
The process of using "problem statements" was expanded and adapted for use across the state. Alternatives for using this approach were developed and shared with home economists. Some of the alternatives reduced the time and travel commitment required of the committees and staff.

Additional problem statements were written to supplement those in Swenson's study. Those statements and the following suggestions were shared with home economists:

- Committee members could conduct a card sort interview with clientele.

- Home economists could conduct a survey in the monthly newsletter.

- Committee members could conduct a personal or telephone interview using a condensed version of the problem statements.

- Home economists could send a mailed survey to a random sample.

The county home economists adapted the "problem statement" approach to meet their needs. Some home economists modified the problem statements provided and others generated their own, based on problems expressed by the advisory committees. The advisory committees conducted card sorts or personal interviews.

An Area Works On The Card Sort
Home economists and advisory committees in the Cedar Rapids area developed a set of problem statements. To increase the awareness about other families' problems, the home economists presented data and trends concerning families in Iowa and the Nation. Committees brainstormed on problems in their counties. The home economics staff wrote a set of statements reflecting these problems.

The card sort technique was used with several groups: home economics advisory committees, Extension councils, and other community groups. Ann Harrison, Extension home economist, explains, "It is a less abstract process, so clientele could more readily give their opinions as to the greatest problems facing families."

Committees and the Questionnaire
Several committees helped develop questionnaires based on problem statements and tabulated the results. County home economics newsletters were also used to disseminate the questionnaire.

Sue McDonnell, Extension home economist, and her home economics advisory committee thought the questionnaire was useful. "The committee felt better about the programs for the year. They felt as if they were on firmer ground in the planning process," she says. "Programs which were developed upon problems strongly emphasized by clientele have had very successful results."

Weight control was identified as a priority problem. Attendance was high at programs developed for this problem and quite successful. "The committee would have predicted this. But preretirement planning also came out strong," McDonnell recalls. "We've had 125 participants in the past 2 years, a response we would not have predicted. We might not have developed these sessions if it hadn't been for the survey."

Positive Results
Committees and clientele were *actively involved* in the needs assessment phase. Committees also helped the programs and, often, they saw the benefits of building on sound information about families.

Implications For Future Planning
The home economists used various techniques, but some common threads increased the effectiveness of the planning process:

- Committees were involved in fact finding and analyzing the information.

- Committees helped develop the problem statements.

- Problems were expressed in a concrete form so that clientele could react.

Most important, the emphasis was on identifying problems first and then developing programs. □

The Limits of Evaluation

William C. Smith
4-H Extension Agent
Canfield Area Extension Center
The Ohio State University

After I completed a week with nearly 100 teenagers at a nine county leadership development camp, I was asked—"Was it a success?" This is not easy to answer. Did everyone have fun? Yes, but is that a measure of success? Was there a major impact on their lives? Yes, I think so. What did the evaluations say? They said the participants felt it was worthwhile and they want a longer camp. But a question still lingers. . . ."How do you measure success in situations where attitudes and long term value clarification is a goal?" How do we measure that counselor who was a camper 10 years ago and always caused trouble, but is now a school teacher and participated in this week's camp as a counselor? Did we help him turn his life around?

This is not an article about evaluation, statistical analysis, or research; it is one about people—young people—whose lives and futures are what 4-H is all about.

How much long-term impact do we really have through 4-H activities and particularly 4-H camping?

We in Extension are really being urged to measure success, use evaluations, find the statistical relationships between dollars spent and numbers of members—all of which are necessary. But how do we know what influence a counselor had on a camper's life? We need to show numbers and measure many areas. But did we touch just one life to help a person see something about themselves that wasn't noticed before?

A young girl attended camp 1 year. She was not very outgoing, nor did she really want to be at camp. She seemed to be sitting most of the time. Then one evening a counselor asked her to dance and then he got her to dance with a camper. The next day her cabin won a volleyball game and she was a major contributor to the success.

How measure success?
We can measure the number of 4-H members, the number of 4-H volunteers, the quality of the 4-H projects, the number of members and volunteers who return each year, the number of campers, and the amount of savings to everyone because of volunteers in 4-H, but can we measure the personal growth and long-term effect on attitudes and values on 4-Hers and campers?

There is no way to show on paper the number of lives touched each

year by 4-H volunteers, camp counselors, or professionals, but I can say it does happen. I have no statistics; only stories of young people becoming quality adults. No, I can't say they wouldn't have become what they are without 4-H. But I can say we were there to help and maybe that made a difference.

At another leadership camp many years ago, a young teenager was caught with alcohol. I talked with him and asked what he thought I should do. He said he should get a second chance. Yes, he should have been sent home according to all the rules, but he wasn't. He came back the next year and the following year he asked to be a counselor for me at junior camp. With some reservations he was selected. He became one of the very best counselors I have ever worked with. He was a big, burly character whom the kids really looked up to and became the "teddy bear" of camp. . . .being

hugged and admired by the young campers.

Was that leadership camp a success so many years ago? Yes, if that one person was given a second chance and grew and learned from the experience.

Touching Lives
We get so involved in 4-H *programs* or *camp programs;* but we forget that the major measure of success is how well our people work with and guide young people. Programs come and go, campers forget that tournament or that camp carnival, but they seldom forget that counselor who got them up and involved when they were feeling so alone.

Was our senior leadership camp a success? Absolutely! We touched 90 young people and gave them new experiences and new relationships and provided leadership opportunities for them. Maybe 10 years from now *they* can tell me how successful we were. As of now, I measure success by the smiles, the tears, and the future families and friendships.

4-H is a growth experience for all those involved. It is people—young and old—growing and learning. If this growth is accomplished then we have been successful. □

4-H Priority Programs

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In 1981, the Pennsylvania Cooperative Extension Service launched a program planning effort designed to direct resources to high priority programs.

These priority programs were identified by the state program committees for Agriculture, 4-H, Family Living, and Community Resource Development. Extension agents and specialists formed task force committees in each area. These task forces then developed objectives, content, delivery, and evaluation methods—methods that were shared with Extension agents during a statewide program planning session.

These plans became the basis for county and state plans of work for the next two years.

Priority Programs
State 4-H youth specialists view these priority programs as an opportunity to increase and improve program evaluation in county 4-H programs; the priority programs require systematic evaluation to report program accomplishment. As similar programs were to be conducted throughout the state, evaluation assistance and training could focus on the four 4-H priority programs.

Over the years the Pennsylvania Extension Information Management System has required program evaluation in the county plans of work in order to report program accomplishment in end of year narrative reports. However, while individual county programs had been reporting program success stories, a more systematic approach to program evaluation was needed to monitor the priority programs.

A process for incorporating systematic collection of evaluation data into the entire "life" of a program, as well as the program planning, was needed. In this way, data would be in hand to include in the narrative reports. In short, concrete plans for program evaluation needed to be developed along with plans to carry out a program so data collection could be accomplished as a program proceeded. An increased emphasis on program evaluation had to fit into and be an integral part of regular programing rather than an additional step. A point for planning and carrying out evaluation needed to be inserted into the already-in-place program planning implementation and reporting system. Constance McKenna's article "Making Evaluation Manageable", provided the means to do this.

Tool for Evaluation
McKenna not only recommended the Provus Discrepancy Evaluation Model as a tool for evaluating Extension programs, but she translated the model into language familiar to Extension workers—language that could be applied to the Pennsylvania EMIS system. Since the McKenna-Provus model is designed to be applied to programs after they have been planned; either just prior to implementation or during the program, its structure could be used to insert systematic evaluation into prepared county plans of work early in the program year. After interpreting the McKenna model to reflect the Pennsylvania EMIS plan of work/task format, it was ready to be applied to "real" county plans of work.

First Session
A presentation was developed for use with county 4-H staff. The first such session was with 4-H agents in one region of the state. The region had selected the 4-H Adult Leadership Priority Program for emphasis during the program year. One of the tasks in leadership development was used as an example and the model was applied to it. In addition a handout sheet containing suggested evaluation methods for the particular task was presented.

A session similar to the one described was included in a statewide 4-H Evaluation workshop and on several other occasions early in the 1981-82 program year. Comments from workshop participants were quite positive. Several indicated using the McKenna-Provus model with the usual plan of work process helped them see program evaluation as part of the process, rather than as a somewhat mysterious extra step. Overall, the workshop participants found that the model helped them feel more comfortable with the whole notion of program evaluation.

Clear Objectives
The most immediate result was a noticeable improvement in both county plans of work (tasks) and narrative reports. When the means to accomplish program evaluation are planned and prepared for at the time the plan of work is being written more attention is given to writing clear, measurable objectives. Vague objectives cannot be tolerated when evaluation is to take place. This became quite clear and was recognized by agents exposed to the model.

County narrative reports submitted at the end of the program year contained the results of more systematic evaluation. Program accomplishment was supported by evidence of clientele reaction and, in some cases, knowledge gain. This constituted a marked improvement over narrative reports that simply indicated a program did take place.

Finally, for those agents exposed to the model, it not only has helped the individuals develop more positive attitudes to program evaluation, but has contributed to a more positive overall climate for evaluation. Such a climate will do much to further program evaluation in Pennsylvania. □

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Documenting Indicators

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One of the great challenges in evaluation of Extension programs is to document social indicators of program effect.

Since many variables affect how an individual experiences a program, it is usually difficult to identify social cause and effect relationships. However, correlational relationships can be documented.

In order to correlate indicators of intended effect with program input, desired learner behavior must be clearly identified in the program objective. Indicators of the desired learner behavior need to be defined in measurable terms. If the indicators are drawn from conceptual frameworks, the data gathered in assessment can contribute to theory construction and thereby strengthen our ability to explain social phenomena.

Evaluation Roles

State subject matter specialist roles are to define desired learner behavior in measurable terms; draw on conceptual framework to explain the desired change and the method of contributing to change; develop an instrument to record behavior so that the changes can be noted; analyze, summarize, and interpret data; and disseminate findings.

County agent roles are to identify desired change, state objectives in terms of learner behavior, assist in developing instruments to record behavior by reviewing drafts and providing field testing opportunities.

Example: A Case Study

Case study analysis can be used to describe participant behavior in educational programs where social indicators are used in objectives.

Prenatal classes provide an example. The literature on becoming a parent for the first time indicates that first parenthood is a crisis—a time of major life change. New parents lack confidence in themselves and do not understand their new role.

If Extension prenatal classes are designed to support adult learners by helping them feel capable in assuming parental responsibilities and able to understand the changes they experience during expectancy and early parenthood, then they should exhibit self confidence and understanding as new parents.

Concepts that might be used to describe the experience of transition to first parenthood are drawn from ego psychology and from learning theory.

Ego psychology differentiates coping behavior from defensive behavior. Theodore Kroeber, ego psychologist and author, found a way to measure specific kinds of coping and defensive behavior. Field theory describes learning as cognitive change: differentiation, generalization, and restructurization.

Descriptions Are Important

In order to determine program effect, adults can be interviewed by using questions that ask them to describe feelings about themselves and how they understand the transition they are experiencing. Clientele descriptions of self are valuable in describing program outcome.

Responses to questions can be analyzed for indicators of coping or defensive behavior. If the amount of coping behavior is as high or even higher after becoming a new parent as it was during the early prenatal months, participants did not exhibit crisis of major proportions on the examined behaviors. If the proportion of defensive behavior is higher than during early prenatal months, participants exhibited an inability to adapt to their new roles.

Field theory describes learning as cognitive structure changes. Responses to interview questions regarding understanding the transition can be analyzed for indicators of differentiation, generalization, and restructurization. Differentiation in this case means clarifying understanding of specific concepts. Generalization is defined as identifying relationships between concepts. Restructurization is defined as understanding of self using the newly acquired knowledge.

Use of Two Bases

Using indicators from at least two different theoretical bases strengthens the validity and reliability of explaining participant behavior.

Interviews that result in case studies can be analyzed for indicators of program effect. Responses to a set of interview questions can be used to identify program participant behavior or social consequences. Agents and specialists design the evaluation methodology together. Agents conduct interviews to collect data and state specialists analyze, summarize, and interpret data. The findings provide a basis for subsequent programming. □

Obtaining Data

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Needs assessment is a process which provides the basis for the ultimate criterion for program evaluation; did the program lessen the need? Needs assessments are also important to Extension in other ways:

- Program development involves designing and implementing a course of action to bring about change; needs assessment is a tool for deciding rationally what that change should be;

- An instructional design with measurable behavioral objectives provides the basis for determining if programs have validity—do they achieve what they set out to achieve? An effective needs assessment provides the basis for determining the additional criterion of utility—was the achievement worthwhile?

- Needs assessments can help in Extension's accountability and evaluation thrust. As citizens identify needs, specify required outcomes, and agree on resources needed to achieve the outcomes, responsibility can begin to be shared for the results. As all partners agree on what is desired and work to make that happen, accountability becomes a shared part of the overall activity.

Bases for Program Priorities
In 1973, the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP) identifed the following four bases for educational program priorities:

- Expressed needs of people.

- Analysis of environment and other conditions of society.

- Emerging research results.

- Administrative response to recommendations and pressures of support groups.

While all four bases are important, it is the first two which must have input from the local situation. Extension agents in counties can depend on state and federal employees to keep them informed (at least partially) on new research results and on administrative responses. Their critical program development challenge, however, is to identify the problems, issues, situations, or concerns that need changing or improving. And that is no easy task. Communities constantly change as people move in and out, through births and deaths, and as individuals themselves change in response to social and economic forces. As a result, what was once an appropriate program can become inappropriate. What was once a defensible program, one to rally community and political support, can become the knell which rings decreased program support and funding. "Energy" and "environment" are examples of programs that have moved up and down in priority in the last decade.

Thus, determining public needs and making value judgments in selecting needs as a basis for program development may be the most important tasks of the local Extension agent. They may also be the most challenging and perplexing tasks.

Needs Assessment Process
In Florida, we have tried to decrease the perplexity by providing agents with a step-by-step checklist for identifying and prioritizing citizen needs. A functional description of the checklist has been published in a manual.

All steps are illustrated in the manual with examples from a comprehensive needs assessment conducted in a specific county. Agents are encouraged to work through all the appropriate steps during planning so that the full scope of the work and needed staff competencies can be identified. Agents check off the steps as they occur to make sure key procedures are not omitted.

Three methods for identifying information about citizen needs or problems are identified. Each method requires increasingly more resources and provides more credible data. The process is cumulative, too. Number 1, "Review Available Information," should be done as the first step to the other methods; and number 2, "Survey Key Informants," should be done before number 3, "Survey Target Population." The final step in each method is to decide if adequate information has been attained. If the answer is "YES", the next step is to begin to prioritize the needs. If the answer is "NO", the next step is to initiate the next higher level of data gathering activity.

The level at which the agent decides to stop in gathering data will depend on available resources and the purpose of the needs assessment.

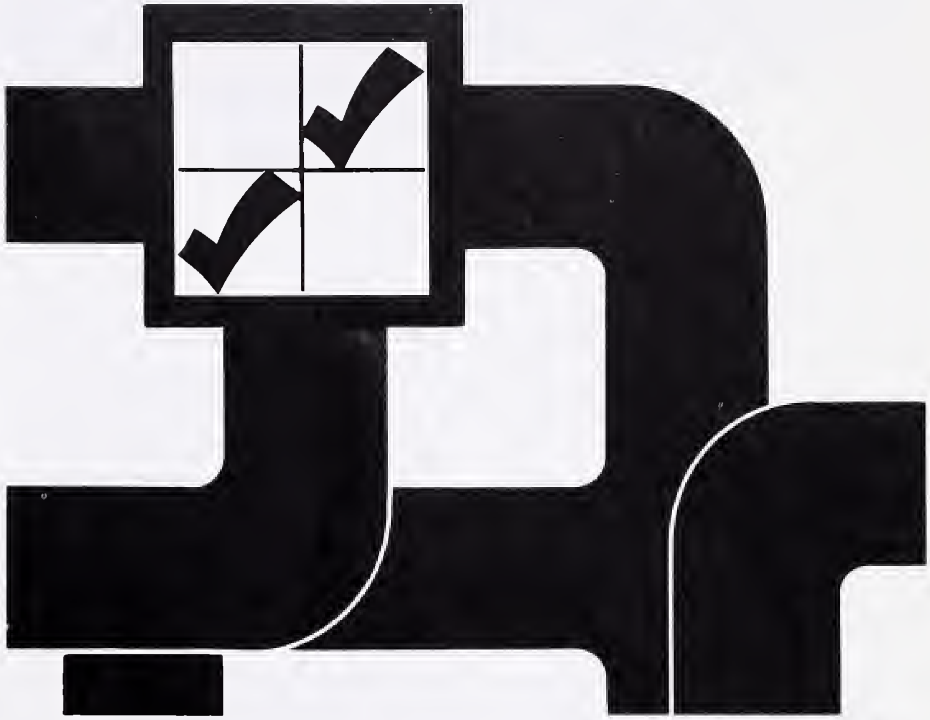
The next part of the checklist describes procedures an agent can use with advisory committees, key informants, or others to prioritize the list of needs; such as Delphi technique, card sorts, scale ratings, paired-weighting procedure, and budget allocation method.

After the prioritization, the agent can select from the methods described the final selection of needs for development of programs. One such method—criteria analysis—seeks to educate

the user on important considerations in selecting needs for program development. Eighteen criteria are described which affect the choices; for example, correlation with Extension mission and support base; who and how many identified the need; expected community support, community barriers, and public interest; previous success, expected impact, and time to show results; and organizational support.

The top 10 or so needs are analyzed against each criterion. Current programs (or needs they address) are also analyzed on the same criteria and at the same time to put new needs in perspective with current programing efforts.

The final selection of a few needs for program planning completes the needs assessment process and begins the process for meaningful change to occur. Unless programs are planned and implemented, the needs assessment process will have been a wasted effort. It may have caused harm by raising the expectations of constituents. Be sure there is a commitment to a resulting program before starting the first step in identifying needs.



Potential Errors
Needs assessments provide important data for local program development and evaluation. Every effort should be made to secure data as free of bias as possible. Some pitfalls to avoid are the following:

- *Imposing our own orientations.* This is the problem of self-fulfilling prophecy; that is, what we go looking for, we find. The professional blinders we wear affect the questions we ask and what we attend to in the answers. The key is to be aware of our limited perspectives and to make every effort to be objective.

- *Paying attention only to surface problems.* These problems are the easiest to identify by clients. For more lasting change, needs assessments should provide input on the underlying causes of problems. Final selection of problems should reflect Extension agent leadership to assure that individuals and groups involved are well informed about community trends, new technology, and so on.

- *Collecting only negative information.* Focusing only on weaknesses may cause clients to feel hopeless. Strengths also need to be identified as a foundation on which to base the attack on problems.

- *Conducting the assessment without adequate support.* Support involves sanction by funding sources of Extension programs, legitimizing by targeted client groups, and direct resources. Many projects are not completed because unanticipated demands on staff time and dollars become too great. Unfortunately, conclusions from incomplete studies may be inaccurate, yet harmful because they have the ring of credibility.

It is important for Cooperative Extension to identify and select needs for program development, so that Extension can help people solve their problems in an era of ever-shrinking resources. We can use needs assessment to determine valid, useful programs that are philosophically and practically sound. If we follow a rational process in which people and the organization reach consensus on how resources will be spent, that is, on which problems will be addressed, we ensure that our time and that of our participants is spent in mutually valued ways. □

RAP Evaluates Inservice Education

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Cornell Cooperative Extension recognizes that people in New York State who make or influence decisions on program direction and resources need evidence on results of these publicly supported educational efforts. Staff at both county and state levels have been encouraged to take advantage, periodically and voluntarily, of inservice education in program evaluation, as well as graduate study opportunities outside the organization. Although national surveys indicate that Extension staff most often think of evaluation for program improvement purposes and less often for accountability, the surveys also point out that staff may not be sufficiently comfortable with planning, implementing, and reporting on program evaluations.

Two years ago, Cornell Cooperative Extension took initial steps to provide uniform statewide inservice education in program evaluation. Teams of state program coordintors and district administrators, having had hands-on experience with an evaluation process adaptable to local programing situations, have been training staff across the state.

The process selected, Reflective Appraisal of Program (RAP), is now demonstrating its potential for wide application across county programs. Its tested standard format includes questions focused upon a model indicating levels of Extension program results and a data collection process based primarily on telephone interviewing. In New York State, the RAP format adapts to most program activities, methods, and clientele within Cornell Cooperative Extension.

Revealing Change
Since RAP relies upon clientele's reflective evidence of results or changes brought about by a given program, it can also reveal participants' estimates of the extent of that change. When selected program activities are placed into the interview questions, Extension staff can fairly efficiently obtain participants' perceptions of the meaning or major value of a program to them. Levels of program results are particularly significant in this evaluation process.

The reflective appraisal approach is useful for either program accountability or improvement purposes. Staff are involving volunteers, who are leaders and/or program committee members, and colleagues at the county, district, and state level in planning and implementing RAP studies. Currently RAP is also proving helpful in determining outcomes of some similar programs across several counties.

Who is Involved?
What do the following have in common in New York State?

- Inner city tenants concerned about conditions in their housing project
- 4-H participants and private sponsors of livestock programs
- Farmers examining minimum tillage techniques
- Homeowners exploring solar energy practices
- 4-H members and leaders involved in community service projects
- Participants in urban home economics programs
- Parents of youth enrolled in a summer nutrition program
- Volunteers in food preservation
- Participants in safe wood burning seminars
- Volunteer Extension program committee members in several counties

All have been involved in evaluating Cooperative Extension programs at the county level during the past 2 years. They may have been randomly selected program participants, volunteer interviewers, or a committee of volunteers examining surveys and summaries of program results and identifying positive factors or action needed.

Appraising Results
What are some Extension program results documented through reflective appraisal? A few examples:

- Tenants improving shopping and management skills and relationships with neighbors and landlords;
- 4-H members identifying skills they will use on the family farm, in their schools, and in future marketing activities;
- Farmers becoming more interested in minimum tillage systems, both for dollar savings and for improving cropping practices;
- Energy tour participants gaining more knowledge about the practical aspects of solar heating and its potential application in existing structures;
- 4-H members learning to accept responsibility for themselves and for their communities;
- Limited income families changing the quality of their diets through improved planning, purchasing, and food preparation practices;
- Parents of young children applying skills that improve communications with their children;
- Urban families learning skills in preserving food and managing money;
- Parents saying, "Any (class) that increases my children's desire to consume vegetables is enthusiastically accepted;" "My child seems more conscious about what he eats now and how much he eats."

However, evaluation findings have little meaning of their own. Staff in New York find they must continually ask questions like these: What do decision makers want to know about our programs? What do

we do? Why do we? Who benefits? In how many ways can we use results of our program evaluation?

Involving people in the evaluation process is a major dimension of RAP. Volunteers, for example, provide an articular support base. Volunteer leaders have an added investment; programs being evaluated are often "theirs" and the results are important to them. They are helpful in collecting, interpreting and reporting on data. For example, volunteer, program committee members have completed 100 interviews in one county and 30 in another; volunteer program committees have identified areas for improvement and possible solutions for each, in—money management, marketing, and leadership needs in 4-H livestock programs. County, district, regional and state staff contribute to planning and carrying out of RAP studies. These RAP teams provide a means for program staff to be involved but to avoid judgmental roles.

Program Selection

Evaluation needs to be planned in the early program stages. It needs to occur at a time when clientele have had a chance to modify their behavior. It needs to fit the time constraints of staff. RAP is not a rigorous research procedure, but it does require effort. Experience with it in New York State indicates programs to be evaluated need to be carefully selected and levels of evidence identified that are most needed for the purpose of each evaluation. And, like other evaluation strategies, RAP should not be used for every program every year.

RAP provides a process for obtaining clientele perceptions of results important to them that occur from a variety of program efforts. However, one process does not encompass the total package of evaluation knowledge and skills useful for all needs. As we seek appropriate program tools for the 80s, we need to take care we don't overdo—or underdo! RAP may not be the most appropriate vehicle to generate documentation of Extension's worth to people unfamiliar with Extension, but it permits staff to "see" programs as participants do. An administrator in another state describes it as, "a simple, defendable approach to systematically gathering information for decision making. . . .much better information than what is generally used."

The designer of RAP considers it an evaluation method keyed to staff development; it extends knowledge and simplified skills to those in the Extension system who do not have opportunity or time to take resident instruction in program evaluation. County level accountability is an important component in Cooperative Extension's public support system and reflective evidence is generally acceptable to and understood by staff, volunteers, county and state legislators, and others close to the programing process.

A Stimulant to Evaluation

RAP assists Cornell Cooperative Extension staff at state and county levels to perform some immediate roles in evaluation. Its concepts and skills are easily grasped: program selection and description; involvement; levels of program results; respondent identification; survey design; data collection and interpretation; and reporting. Inservice education in RAP has stimulated evaluation action. Since county staff have been primarily trained to evaluate their highly locally financed programs, state staff provide guidance in selected multi-county evaluation efforts. Some studies will produce a regional perspective, and will strengthen documentation of program results.

Evaluation and accountability are "writ large" in Cooperative Extension's 4-year plan of work. The recently published *Extension in the 1980s, A Report of the Joint USDA-NASULGC Committee on the Future of Cooperative Extension* recommends that Cooperative Extension involve the public and decisionmakers in its evaluation efforts in order to create better understanding. Recommendations also suggest improved reporting to the public and to decisionmakers at all levels.

The expectation is that better informed decisionmakers will make better decisions about Cooperative Extension. People are usually more motivated towards program evaluation processes when they can see their relevance to program support and have appropriate evaluation tools. RAP can make a significant contribution to program evaluation in Cooperative Extension in the 1980's. □

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